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1. Prior to 10 February 1953, the VP air force was assigned to the Ministry of the Interior on Glinka Street in Berlin. The headquarters of the VP air force was housed in reconstructed buildings of Johannisthal airfield. Officer personnel attached to this headquarters included:
Commanding general: Major General Heinz Kessler;
Chief of Staff: Major General Heinz Zorn;
Political officer and deputy chief of staff: Colonel Kurt Franke;
Chief of the training department: Colonel Schroeder
Chief of the personnel department: Lieutenant Colonel Werner Barthel;
Chief of the supply department: Colonel Johannes Alter;
Chief of the medical department: Colonel (Med) Riepelmeier (fnu);
Deputy chief of the medical department: Lieutenant Colonel (Med) Seyfert (fnu);
Chief of the technical department: Colonel Kayser (fnu);
Chief finance officer: Lieutenant Colonel Haenel (fnu);
Chief of the signal department: Lieutenant Colonel Noffke (fnu);
Chief of the construction department: Lieutenant Colonel Erich Weichert.¹
Attached to the headquarters of the VP air force were a guard battalion, a motor transport company and a signal company. Units subordinate to the headquarters included:
The 600th Ftr Div in Cottbus commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Wilpert;
the 300th Air Tech Div, organized in 1953 in Bautzen or Kamenz and commanded by Major Baldamus (fnu);
the 500th Basic Training School in Kamenz commanded by Colonel Leopold (fnu);
the 400th Special School in Pirna commanded by Major Boldt (fnu);
the 501st Officer Candidate School at Augustusbad near Radeberg commanded by Captain Schaefer (fnu).²
2. Regiments assigned to the 600th Ftr Div included the:
601st Regt in Cottbus;
602d Regt in Kamenz;
603d Regt in Bautzen;
604th Mechanic School in Kamenz.
Ground battalions assigned to the air technical division included the 301st, 302d and 303d Bns in Cottbus, Kamenz and Bautzen respectively.
Each air regiment was organized into three squadrons of three flights each with three to four planes to each flight. The VP air force has not yet been equipped with aircraft of its own. Training was being conducted with Yak-18s. Shortly after 10 February, training with MiG-15s was to be started.
3. VP air force officers wore a visor-type cap with light-blue ribbon, black patent leather strap and crossed propellers surrounded by a wreath of ears of corn;

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general officers wore a gold-braided hat cord. The cockade on the hat was set in a radiant crown. The garrison cap of flying officers was marked by golden pipings, that of other officers by silver pipings. Trousers tucked in boots were worn with field uniforms. Garrison caps were worn by EM while on duty, but visor caps with a blue ribbon and a cockade with dress uniforms. Officers wore loose-fitting double-breasted coats with open collars, grey shirts and black ties. Collar patches were kept in light blue, with golden pipings for flying officers and silver pipings for all other officers. Enlisted men's coats had a stand-up collar and light blue collar patches. Collar patches were marked by golden wings for flying personnel, and silver wings for all other personnel. Officers wore dark blue trousers with light blue stripes along their outer seams. While on duty, both trousers and breeches were worn by them. VP air force personnel wore light blue-bordered epaulets.

4. The 600th Ftr Div, the 601st Air Regt and the 301st Grd Bn were quartered at Cottbus airfield. Except for two permanent buildings nearest to the town and occupied by the fighter division and the 601st Air Regt, the airfield buildings were occupied by a Soviet air unit. The 301st Grd Bn was quartered in single-story semi-permanent buildings. The German portion of the airfield was separated from the Soviet installations by a two-meter fence and brick wall. The buildings occupied by VP personnel were moreover surrounded by a board fence two meters high. The German student pilots entered the airfield through a gap in the fence, while the gate was reserved to Soviet personnel. The sanitary and kitchen facilities of the German camp were up to modern requirements. Food for the flying personnel was excellent and served in tidy mess halls. The Soviet flight instructors took their meals separately.³
5. The barracks installation occupied by VP air force personnel in Kamenz was subdivided into two sections by a two-meter brick wall. The section nearest to the town housed the 500th Basic Training School, while the other section quartered the 602d Air Regt, the 604th Mechanic School and the 302d Grd Bn. The quartering buildings were turned over to the Germans by the Soviets about August 1952 after extensive repair work.⁴
6. The Husaren Kaserne in Bautzen quartered the 603d Air Regt, the 303d Grd Bn, and later also the Hq of the 300th Air Tech Div. [redacted] the headquarters 25X1 of the division was to move to Kamenz. The installation was made available by the Soviets in August/September 1952 after an extensive renovation.⁵
7. The school in Pirna was housed in old permanent buildings on the slope south of Pirna, each of the nicely furnished rooms quartering four to six men. A mess hall and several well-equipped classrooms were available. After early October 1952, a meteorological course attended by about 300 students was given at the school. The school occasionally experienced difficulties in the water supply caused by inadequate pumping facilities. In August 1952, these difficulties led to numerous diseases.
8. The officer candidate school was located in Augustusbad. Originally it had been planned to establish there a large hospital and a recreation center for the Air Police. However, the execution of this plan proved too costly and only the officer candidate school, which was attended by 200 to 300 students, was established at the former Augustusbad Hotel.
9. On 1 September 1952, training for about 160 VP student pilots was started in Cottbus, Kamenz and Bautzen. The initial training was scheduled to be completed by 1 December 1952. Owing to unfavorable weather conditions, this training schedule could not be kept. Initial pilot training was about completed by the end of 1952 in Cottbus. Training with fast aircraft and jet planes had not been started by 10 February 1953. However, theoretical instructions on MiG-15 aircraft

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had been initiated. In early February 1953, [redacted] parachute training started. All the flight instructors employed were Soviets. Accidents involving injuries to flying personnel were seldom.

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[redacted] the technical preparations made before each flight were very careful. Student pilots wore a lined leather jacket, felt boots and a lined helmet fitted with ear pieces. Pilots had to turn over their helmets to the following student pilot, because only an inadequate supply of helmets was available. For this reason, many students caught colds.⁶

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10. It was planned to considerably enlarge the VP air force in the course of 1953. This was also indicated by the order to make plans for the establishment of six dispensaries with 30 beds each and six with 50 beds each.

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[redacted] only two major installations with a capacity of 1,200 men each were to be built and another airfield to be made available either at Rothenburg near Goerlitz (also referred to as Bremenham) or at Preschen (Jocksdorf) in 1953. Alongside with the reduction of plans made for 1953, [redacted]

Originally it was planned to procure medical equipment including an X-ray train, a mobile dental clinic and five low-pressure chambers at a total cost of two million eastmarks. Eventually only the procurement of one X-ray train and three low-pressure chambers for the three air regiments was envisaged.

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[redacted] The reduction of all expansion plans had a depressing effect. Prior to 10 February 1953, no mobilization plans for the medical service were in existence.

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11. After March 1952, the VP air force was given a medical service of its own. The first full-time medical officer employed was Lieutenant Colonel Seyfert who, in March 1952, issued the first directives for the medical service of the VP air force. Medical officers Captain Moesser, Colonel Riepelmeier, Major Schreiter and Major Sandmann joined the medical service on May, on 15 July, 15 August and 1 September 1952 respectively. On 13 January 1953, Sandmann was arrested because of alleged illegal connections with the West. According to the 1953 T/O, the VP air police was to have 23 medical officers, while only three were actually available. Prior to 10 February, only one doctor volunteered for service with the VP. In order to remedy this situation, a law was promulgated, according to which doctors, after passing their state examination may be assigned to the VP for one year within their obligatory two-year training period as assistant doctors. By early March 1953, 18 such doctors, who were to hold the rank of senior lieutenant, were to be assigned to the VP air force.
- After September 1952, dispensaries were available with the Hq of the VP air force in Johannisthal (18 beds); at Cottbus, Kamenz and Bautzen airfields (30 beds each); at the schools in Kamenz (40 beds) and at Pirna and Augustusbad (15 beds each), i.e. a total of seven dispensaries, which according to the Soviet usage were called hospitals.
- The air units of the VP air force were served by Soviet medical officers, while the other VP air force units were served by local civilian doctors. VP air force personnel totalled about 7,000 men. The state of health was good. In January 1953,

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venereal diseases amounted to 0.3 percent of all cases treated. In August 1952, when stomach troubles and disturbances of the digestive tract occurred on an increased scale, commanding officers of VP air force units believed in the possibility of sabotage acts. However, medical officers proved that these disturbances were caused by bad drinking water. In the absence of new directives, the medical service was essentially handled along lines valid for the former German Armed Forces.

Medicaments and dressing materials were supplied in adequate amounts by the Deutsche Handels Zentrale (German Trade Central) (DHZ). A central VP medical depot was planned to be established at Mittenwalde near Koenigswusterhausen. Penicillin was not in short supply. Food was adequate. The same applied to clothing, underwear and footwear. Permanent quarters were exemplary. Some temporary quarters showed major defects last winter.

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VP auxiliary medical personnel consisted of Feldschere and the group of technical sergeants, sergeants, corporals and privates of both sexes. Feldschere were former medical personnel who had attended a six-month special course at a VP hospital in Leipzig-Wiederitzsch. Since recently, this course had been extended to two years. Feldschere, who in their professional qualifications generally corresponded to the technical sergeant (Med) of the former German Armed Forces, held the rank of junior lieutenant. The other auxiliary medical personnel was not well trained. Among the women, there were many well qualified nurses. The VP air force did not have a hospital of its own. Serious cases of illness were treated at the VP hospitals in Leipzig or Berlin. Civilian hospitals were used only exceptionally. It was planned to establish special hospitals for the VP air force.

12. The last major inductions for the VP air force occurred in May and June 1952. The physical inspections of the inductees were mostly made at state clinics. There were no directives for the conduct of these inspections and the fitness classification was left to the discretion of the physicians concerned. In order to remedy this situation, a group of leading VP medical officers, in late August 1952, worked out directives for these physical inspections. These directives were based on former HDV 53 (Heeresdienstvorschrift) (German Army Technical Manual) and the translation of a Soviet technical manual comprising about 24 typewritten pages. The new regulations concerning the physical fitness of VP recruits contained the following points:

Minimum height: 150 cm

Minimum age: 16

Weight: A weight 10 percent below normal made the recruit unfit.

Width round the chest: 1/2 of height. Inspiration must widen the chest by at least six cm.

Anatomical anomalies which do not show when clothes are worn and which do not affect the free use of limbs have no influence on the physical classification of the person concerned. However, a contraction of an arm or leg by more than five cm made a man unfit for military service. A candidate was declared unfit if he had lost fingers and so could not handle weapons satisfactorily, if major joints had become stiff; if he suffered from allergic diseases owing to a malfunction of endocrine glands; if he was physically underdeveloped. Normal heart action and blood pressure was a prerequisite for military fitness. If findings were not clear, the physical inspection had to be supplemented by examinations held by specialists. Diseases making a candidate unfit for service with the VP included tuberculosis, unless it had been healed at least four years prior to induction; all chronic lung diseases, such as asthma, emphysema etc; diseases of the stomach, the intestinal canal and the kidneys; and all types of neurosis and mental disturbances. A urin analysis was obligatory. Regarding to organs of sense, at least 75 percent of the normal power of sight had to be reached by both eyes with the help of glasses; disturbances of the sense of color were taken into consideration only if a candidate for the air force was examined. Chronic diseases of the middle ear, otosclerosis and serious diseases of the inner ear ruled out military service. A slight reduction of the auditory faculty did not influence the result of the inspection.

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The following degrees of fitness were laid down:

Tauglich I (class I fitness): Fit for any duty

Tauglich II (class II fitness): Of limited fitness. (Unfit for sustained physical strains)

Tauglich III (class III fitness): Fit for duty as clerks or workshop personnel.

Zeitlich untauglich (temporarily unfit) because of diseases of bodily defects, which may be eliminated.

The results of the physical inspection were entered on standard forms, since recently they have been recorded in a special health book. It was found out that for a large number of VP personnel records of physical inspections made prior to induction were not available and that in some cases such physical inspections had not been made at all. Thereupon orders were given that these inspections be made without delay. The physical inspections of 200 students including 40 women from 16 to 26 years old who attended a meteorological course in Pirna had the following results:

Tauglich I : 48 percent

Tauglich II : 30 "

Tauglich III : 18 "

Temporarily unfit: 2 "

Unfit : 2 "

13. Prior to 10 February 1953, the fitness of candidates for the VP air force was determined by a Soviet commission in Koenigswusterhausen. The commission examined about 1,500 men in Kamenz in July 1952. The examination followed the usual line of such physical inspections, but complicated tests were not made. The results of the examinations were not communicated to the chief medical officer of the VP air force. It was believed that of the 1,500 men examined, 200 to 300 candidates were classified as fit for flying. In spite of special requests, no German medical officer was allowed to witness the medical examinations of the Soviets.

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following case indicating that the Soviet commission of doctors worked rather carelessly: A VP lieutenant who had been classified as fit for flying complained about severe headaches and said that his eyesight was greatly reduced on one eye. When he was examined at a Dresden hospital it was determined that he was almost blind on this eye. When this result was communicated to Karlshorst, the lieutenant concerned was declared unfit for flying. The student pilots were given special rations which were good and ample but unusual for Germans. This led to temporary troubles of digestion which were overcome by November 1952. Prior to each flight the students were inspected by a Soviet medical officer. The pulse was tested prior and after each flight.

1. Comment.

Colonel Lehwess-Litzmann, a former German Air Force general staff officer, has much experience in the tactical employment of air units.

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2. Comment.

The three battalions of this division stationed in Cottbus, Kamenz and Bautzen correspond to the Soviet OATBs.

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[REDACTED] the officer candidate school of the VP air force is located in Augustusbad. It is believed that the students of this school are given basic military and political training before their flight training is started.

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3.



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4.

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6.

Comment.

[REDACTED] the German student pilots after being trained with Yak-18s, are given further training on Yak-11s.

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